

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Amend claims: 1-15 and added new claims 16-28.

1. (Currently Amended) A process ~~Process~~ to prepare base oils from a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product, the processing comprising by
(a) separating the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product into a fraction (i) boiling in the middle distillate range and below, a heavy ends fraction (iii) and an intermediate base oil precursor fraction (ii) boiling between fraction (i) and fraction (iii)[[,]];
(b) subjecting the base oil precursor fraction (ii) to a catalytic hydroisomerization ~~hydroisomerisation~~ and catalytic dewaxing process to yield one or more base oil grades[[,]];
(c) subjecting the heavy ends fraction (iii) to a conversion step to yield a fraction (iv) boiling below the heavy ends fraction (iii); and,
(d) subjecting the high boiling fraction (v) of fraction (iv) to a catalytic hydroisomerization ~~hydroisomerisation~~ and catalytic dewaxing process to yield one or more base oil grades.
2. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~Process~~ according to claim 1, wherein the heavy ends fraction (iii) has an initial boiling point of between 500 °C and 600 °C.
3. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-2,~~ wherein step (b) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group consisting of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.
4. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-3,~~ wherein step (c) comprises ~~is performed as a~~ hydrocracking/hydroisomerization ~~hydroisomerisation~~ process comprising contacting the heavy ends fraction (iii) with ~~making use of~~ an amorphous catalyst comprising an acidic functionality and a hydrogenation/dehydrogenation functionality.

5. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-3,~~ wherein step (c) is performed under catalytic dewaxing conditions in the presence of a catalyst comprising a molecular sieve having a 12 member ring structure and a metal hydrogenation components.
6. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~Process according to claim 5,~~ wherein ~~the conditions are so chosen that also a catalytic hydroisomerization hydroisomerisation and catalytic dewaxing takes place such that in effect step (c) and (d) take place simultaneously.~~
7. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of steps 1-5,~~ wherein step (d) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.
8. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-7,~~ wherein the feeds feed to step (a), step (b) and/or step (c) is first hydrogenated ~~in order to remove oxygenates and/or olefins present in such feeds.~~
9. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-3,~~ wherein step (c) is ~~performed by means of~~ comprises a thermal cracking process.
10. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-3,~~ wherein step (c) is ~~performed by means of~~ comprises a catalytic cracking process.
11. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 9, ~~Process according to any one of claims 9 or 10,~~ wherein the fraction boiling below 370 °C as obtained in step (c) is subjected to an oligomerization step (f).

12. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~Process according to~~ claim 11, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is mixed with the base oil products obtained in step (b) and/or (d).

13. (Currently Amended) The process of ~~Process according to~~ claim 11, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is dewaxed in step (b).

14. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, ~~Process according to any one of claims 1-13,~~ wherein the effluent of step (c) is provided to step (a), such that in effect steps (b) and (d) take place simultaneously.

15. (Currently Amended) A process ~~Process~~ to prepare a waxy raffinate fraction boiling for more than 90 wt% between 370 and 550 °C from a Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product which boils for more than 40 wt% above 550 °C by (aa) separating the Fischer-Tropsch synthesis product into a fraction (i) boiling in the middle distillate range and below, a heavy ends fraction (iii) having an initial boiling point between 500 and 600 °C and a waxy raffinate fraction (ii) boiling between fraction (i) and heavy ends fraction (iii), (bb) subjecting the heavy ends fraction (iii) to a conversion step wherein part of the heavy ends fraction is converted to lower boiling compounds and recycling the effluent of the conversion step to step (aa).

16. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein step (b) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group consisting of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.

17. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein step (c) comprises a hydrocracking/hydroisomerization process comprising contacting the heavy ends fraction (iii) with an amorphous catalyst comprising an acidic functionality and a hydrogenation/dehydrogenation functionality.

18. (New) The process of claim 2, step (c) is performed under catalytic dewaxing conditions in the presence of a catalyst comprising a molecular sieve having a 12 member ring structure and a metal hydrogenation component.
19. (New) The process of claim 18, wherein step (c) and (d) take place simultaneously.
20. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein step (d) is performed in the presence of a catalyst comprising a noble metal hydrogenation component and a molecular sieve selected from the group of zeolite beta, ZSM-23, ZSM-22, ZSM-35 or ZSM-12.
21. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein the feed to step (a), step (b) and/or step (c) is first hydrogenated.
22. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein step (c) comprises a thermal cracking process.
23. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein step (c) comprises a catalytic cracking process.
24. (New) The process of claim 23, wherein the fraction boiling below 370 °C as obtained in step (c) is subjected to an oligomerization step (f).
25. (New) The process of claim 24, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is mixed with the base oil products obtained in step (b) and/or (d).
26. (New) The process of claim 24, wherein a base oil fraction is prepared in step (f) and which base oil fraction is dewaxed in step (b).
27. (New) The process of claim 2, wherein the effluent of step (c) is provided to step (a), such that in effect steps (b) and (d) take place simultaneously.

28. (New) The process of claim 10, wherein the fraction boiling below 370 °C as obtained in step (c) is subjected to an oligomerization step (f).